

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): An information processing apparatus for managing a virtual space, the information apparatus comprising:

a processor;
a memory device storing instructions, which when executed by the processor, cause the processor to:

- (a) maintain ~~a user space within the virtual space, wherein the virtual space includes:~~
 - (i) ~~the user space comprises spatial locations~~ a user space that virtually represents an areas owned and occupied by a first user, wherein the first user controls admission of other users to the user space for chat sessions with the first user; and
 - (ii) ~~said a plurality of spatial locations are rendered as three dimensional images, said plurality of spatial locations including;~~
 - (iii) ~~said spatial locations including:~~
 - (A) a first spatial location rendered as a first three dimensional image;
and
 - (B) a second spatial location rendered as a second three dimensional image; and
 - (iv) ~~the first user controls admission of other users within the user space for chat sessions with the first user;~~
- (b) store:
 - (i) the user space;
 - (ii) the plurality of spatial locations;

- (iii) a list of spatial locations corresponding to the first user, wherein the list of spatial locations lists spatial locations recorded by the first user including the second spatial location; and
- (iiiiv) at least one list of other users associated with a chat session within the user space, wherein said list of other users:
 - (A) is generated by the first user; and
 - (B) includes:
 - (x) at least one ~~second-other~~ user denied admission to the user space; and
 - (y) at least one ~~third-other~~ user granted admission to the user space; ~~where the list of spatial locations is designated by the first user;~~
- (c) place the list of spatial locations at a position in said first spatial location rendered as said first three dimensional image, wherein:
 - (i) the position in said first three dimensional spatial location is designated by the first user; and
 - (ii) in response to said-at least one ~~third-second~~ user selecting said second spatial location from said list of spatial locations which is placed at said position by said first user, a graphical representation of said at least one ~~third-second~~ user is moved from said first spatial location to said second special-spatial location;
- (d) notify the first user when ~~one of said other~~ a requesting users makes a request for admission to the user space occupied by the first user;
- (e) determine:
 - (i) based on the request for admission, whether the ~~second-requesting~~ user is denied admission to the user space or granted admission to the user space based on the list of users; and
 - (ii) based on a time associated with the request for admission, whether the ~~second-requesting~~ user is denied admission to the user space based on a passing of a predetermined period of time; and

- (f) control admission of the requesting user to the user space based on a response from the first user.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The information processing apparatus of Claim 1, wherein when executed by the processor, the plurality of instructions cause the processor to provide at least one of a visual and audible notification to the first user.

Claims 3-4 (canceled).

Claim 5 (currently amended): The information processing apparatus of Claim 1, wherein when executed by the processor, the plurality of instructions cause the processor to:

- (a) store first entry information generated by the first user to allow other users to enter the user space;
- (b) distribute the first entry information to the ~~second~~requesting user in response to an instruction from the first user; and
- (c) determine whether entry information used by the ~~second~~requesting user to gain access to the user space matches the first entry information when the ~~second~~requesting user uses the distributed first entry information to make a request for admission to the user space; and
- (d) when the determining means determines that the entry information used by the ~~second~~requesting user matches the first entry information:
 - (i) terminate the notification; and
 - (ii) permit the ~~second~~requesting user admission to the user space.

Claim 6 (canceled).

Claim 7 (currently amended): An information processing method for managing a virtual space, the information processing method comprising:

maintaining a user space within the virtual space, wherein the virtual space includes:

- (a) ~~the user space comprises spatial locations~~ a user space that virtually represents an areas owned and occupied by a first user, wherein the first user controls admission of other users to the user space for chat sessions with the first user;
- (b) ~~said a plurality of spatial locations are rendered as three dimensional images, said plurality of spatial locations including:~~
 - (i) a first spatial location rendered as a first three dimensional image;
and
 - (ii) a second spatial location rendered as a second three dimensional image;
- (c) ~~said spatial locations includes a first spatial location rendered as a first three dimensional image; and~~
- (d) ~~the first user controls admission of other users within the user space for chat sessions with the first user;~~

storing:

- (a) the user space;
- (b) the plurality of spatial locations;
- (bc) a list of spatial locations corresponding to the first user, wherein the list of spatial locations lists spatial locations recorded by the first user including the second spatial location; and
- (ed) at least one list of users associated with a chat session within the user space, wherein said list of users:
 - (i) is generated by the first user; and
 - (ii) includes:
 - (A) at least one other user denied admission to the user space;
 - and

- (B) at least one other user granted admission to the user space
~~wherein the list of spatial locations is designated by the first~~
user;

placing the list of spatial locations at a position in said first spatial location rendered as said first three dimensional image, wherein:

- (a) the position in said first three dimensional spatial location is designated by the first user; and
- (b) in response to said-at least one ~~third-second~~ user selecting said second spatial location from said list of spatial locations which is placed at said position by said first user, a graphical representation of said at least one ~~third-second~~ user is moved from said first spatial location to said second special location;

notifying the first user when a ~~second-requesting~~ user makes a request for admission to the user space occupied by the first user;

determining, based on the request for admission, whether the ~~second-requesting~~ user is denied admission to the user space or granted admission to the user space based on the list of users;

determining, based on a time associated with the request for admission, whether the ~~second-requesting~~ user is denied admission to the user space based on a passing of a predetermined period of time; and

controlling admission of the ~~second-requesting~~ user to the user space based on a response from the first user, the response being based on the determination made by said determining steps.

Claim 8 (currently amended): A storage medium having stored therein a computer-readable program for causing a computer system to perform processing which enables a plurality of users to communicate with one another in a shared virtual space formed and provided on a computer network, the program comprising the steps of:

maintaining a user space within the virtual space, wherein the virtual space includes:

- (a) ~~the user space comprises spatial locations~~ a user space that virtually represent areas owned and occupied by a first user, wherein the first user controls admission of other users to the user space for chat sessions with the first user;
- (b) ~~said a plurality of~~ spatial locations are rendered as three dimensional images, said plurality of spatial locations including;
- (c) ~~said spatial locations including;~~
 - (i) a first spatial location rendered as a first three dimensional image; and
 - (ii) a second spatial location rendered as a second three dimensional image; and
- (d) ~~the first user controls admission of other users within the user space for chat sessions with the first user;~~

storing:

- (a) the user space;
- (b) the plurality of spatial locations;
- (bc) a list of spatial locations corresponding to the first user, wherein the list of spatial locations lists spatial locations recorded by the first user including the second spatial location; and
- (ed) at least one list of users associated with a chat session within the user space, wherein said list of users:
 - (i) is generated by the first user; and
 - (ii) includes:
 - (A) at least one other user denied admission to the user space; and
 - (B) at least one other user granted admission to the user space wherein the list of spatial locations is designated by the first user;

placing the list of spatial locations at a position in said first spatial location rendered as said first three dimensional image, wherein:

- (a) the position in said first three dimensional spatial location is designated by the first user; and
- (b) in response to ~~said~~ at least one ~~third~~ second user selecting said second spatial location from said list of spatial locations which is placed at said position by said first user, a graphical representation of said at least one ~~third~~ second user is moved from said first spatial location to said second special location;

notifying the first user when a ~~second~~ requesting user makes a request for admission to the user space occupied by the first user;

determining, based on the request for admission, whether the ~~second~~ requesting user is denied admission to the user space or granted admission to the user space based on the list of users;

determining, based on a time associated with the request for admission, whether the ~~second~~ requesting user is denied admission to the user space based on a passing of a predetermined period of time; and

controlling admission of the ~~second~~ requesting user to the user space based on the determination made in the determining steps.

Claim 9 (currently amended): A program for causing a computer to perform the steps of: maintaining ~~a user space within the~~ a virtual space, wherein the virtual space includes:

- (a) ~~the user space comprises spatial locations~~ a user space that virtually represents an areas owned and occupied by a first user, wherein the first user controls admission of other users to the user space for chat sessions with the first user;
- (b) ~~said a plurality of spatial locations are rendered as three dimensional images, said plurality of spatial locations including;~~
- (c) ~~said spatial locations including;~~
 - (i) a first spatial location rendered as a first three dimensional image; and

(ii) a second spatial location rendered as a second three dimensional image; and

~~(d) the first user controls admission of other users within the user space for chat sessions with the first user;~~

storing:

(a) the user space;

~~(b) the plurality of spatial locations;~~

~~(bc) a list of spatial locations corresponding to the first user, wherein the list of spatial locations lists spatial locations recorded by the first user including the second spatial location; and~~

~~(ed) at least one list of users associated with a chat session within the user space, wherein said list of users:~~

~~(i) is generated by the first user; and~~

~~(ii) includes:~~

~~(A) at least one other user denied admission to the user space; and~~

~~(B) at least one other user granted admission to the user space wherein the list of spatial locations is designated by the first user;~~

placing the list of spatial locations at a position in said first spatial location rendered as said first three dimensional image, wherein;

(a) the position in said first three dimensional spatial location is designated by the first user; and

(b) in response to ~~said~~ at least one ~~third-second~~ user selecting said second spatial location from said list of spatial locations which is placed at said position by said first user, a graphical representation of said at least one ~~third-second~~ user is moved from said first spatial location to said second special location;

notifying a first user when a ~~second-requesting~~ user makes a request for admission to a ~~virtual~~ the user space occupied by the first user;

determining, based on the request for admission, whether the ~~second-requesting~~ user is denied admission to the user space or granted admission to the user space based on the list of users stored in said storage means;

determining, based on a time associated with the request for admission, whether the ~~second-requesting~~ user is denied admission to the user space based on a passing of a predetermined period of time; and

controlling admission of the ~~second-requesting~~ user to the virtual space based on the determination made in the determining steps.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The program of Claim 9, the program causing the computer to perform the further steps of:

storing a list of users designated by the first user as those denied admission to the virtual space;

determining whether the ~~second-requesting~~ user is on the list when the ~~second-requesting~~ user makes the request for admission to the virtual space; and

terminating the notification and denying the ~~second-requesting~~ user admission to the virtual space when it is determined that the ~~second-requesting~~ user is on the list.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The program of Claim 9, the program causing the computer to perform the further steps of:

storing a list of users designated by the first user as those permitted admission to the virtual space;

determining whether the ~~second-requesting~~ user is on the list when the ~~second-requesting~~ user makes the request for admission to the virtual space; and

terminating the notification and permitting the ~~second-requesting~~ user admission to the virtual space when it is determined that the ~~second-requesting~~ user is on the list.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The program of Claim 9, the program causing the computer to perform the further steps of:

storing first entry information generated by the first user to allow other users to enter the virtual space;

distributing the stored first entry information to the ~~second-requesting~~ user in response to an instruction from the first user;

determining whether entry information used by the ~~second-requesting~~ user to gain access to the virtual space matches the stored first entry information when the ~~second-requesting~~ user uses the distributed first entry information to make a request for admission to the virtual space; and

terminating the notification and permitting the ~~second-requesting~~ user admission to the virtual space when it is determined in the determining step that the entry information used by the ~~second-requesting~~ user matches the stored first entry information.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The program of Claim 9, the program causing the computer to perform the further steps of:

storing a list of predetermined spatial locations in the virtual space, the spatial locations being designated by the first user; and

placing the stored list in predetermined space in the virtual space in response to an instruction from the first user.

Claim 14 (previously presented): The information processing apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the list of spatial locations includes at least one spatial location that virtually represents an area owned by a user other than the first user.

Claim 15 (previously presented): The information processing method of Claim 7, wherein the list of spatial locations includes at least one spatial location that virtually represents an area owned by a user other than the first user.

Claim 16 (previously presented): The storage medium of Claim 8, wherein the list of spatial locations includes at least one spatial location that virtually represents an area owned by a user other than the first user.

Claim 17 (previously presented): The program of Claim 9, wherein the list of spatial locations includes at least one spatial location that virtually represents an area owned by a user other than the first user.